

## Article

European Union Enlargement and the New Roles of National Capitals at the European Peripheries : with 1 Figure and 2 Tables

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• *European enlargement – Dynamics of urban systems – Edge of Europe*

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## **European Union Enlargement and the New Roles of National Capitals at the European Peripheries**

*Die Erweiterung der Europäischen Union und die neue Rolle nationaler Hauptstädte an den europäischen Peripherien*

With 1 Figure and 2 Tables

There is significant empirical evidence that the process of European integration functions as a lever on territorial competition and, particularly, on inter-urban competition. Some studies do demonstrate some urban-territorial tendencies, where a strengthening of Europe's central nucleus (the core) and its urban system can be noted. On the other hand, the process of integration may lead to the specialisation of territorial segments which would also result in the functional-economic valorisation of the central nucleus. Based on other research on correlated issues and focusing on the analysis of air traffic departures and arrivals to and from metropolises situated at the European peripheries in the period between 1989 and 2000 we reach some interesting conclusions. Results from this research show that, along with a 'centralisation and continentalisation' of spaces within the EU, the main metropolises of the European peripheries – particularly national capitals – are also becoming stronger.

### **1. Introduction**

A number of authors have concentrated on the territorial consequences of the process of European integration. Particular attention has been given to issues of inter-urban and inter-regional competition in order to find explanations for the changes that have been noted in the urban dynamics of the European space since the 1980s.

There is already significant empirical evidence that the process of European integration functions as

a lever on territorial competition and, particularly, on inter-urban competition. The sub-regional consequences of this process are not uni-directional, nor can an unequivocal relation between the dimension of cities and their competitive behaviour be found. Nevertheless, some studies do demonstrate some urban-territorial tendencies, where a strengthening of Europe's central nucleus (the core) and its urban system can be noted. This tends to spread towards its immediate "fringe", while at the same time increased dependency and reduced competitive capacity of peripheral urban systems occur.

On the other hand, the process of integration may lead to the specialisation of territorial segments which would also result in the functional-economic valorisation of the central nucleus. Taking into account the "historical" economic and political configuration of the European space, where a central nucleus was dominated by continental powers and surrounded by maritime powers of major or minor dimensions, it can be suggested that the process of European integration has created a process of "continentalisation" which has contributed to the weakening of some peripheral cities' roles as poles of inter-continental anchorage.

By using various recent analyses and introducing some results of an ongoing investigation about the evolution of European and non-European air connections in the last ten-year period, we will try to discuss these territorial dynamics. As focus we have used the issue relating to the importance of state capitals in structuring peripheral urban systems: cities which have in reality seen, with the process of integration, their "capitality" reinforced in the national context.

In light of this evidence, policies to reinforce peripheral urban systems at the E.U. level should be defined, in a framework of polycentrism at the highest hierarchical level, conferring on the peripheral metropolis the role of gateways (interfaces), with macro-regional specialisations, adding value to their historic heritage and comparative advantages.

## **2. European Integration: Territorial Competition, Centralisation and Continentalisation**

Various authors (*Cheshire* 1990, 1999; *Cheshire* and *Gordon* 1996; *Parkinson* et al. 1992; *Rozenblat* 1998, and others) have analysed the territorial consequences of the process of European integration, offering reasonable convergence in the

sense that an economic centralisation is operating and in the short run, also demographic and political. *P. Cheshire* (1999) emphasises the increased competition between cities and territories caused by the process of integration. In general, these approaches suggest, or have made explicit, the development of a centre-periphery model (*Cheshire* and *Carbonaro* 1996).

The use of the "periphery" concept, in the current context, acquires some transitoriness, as in this case it is being applied to a macro-regional space (the European Union) in a process of mutation. By looking at the recent history of the European Union's construction, we can see how the cartographic/spatial representation of this concept in the European space has changed: from *Roger Brunet's* metaphoric vision, in which the periphery was represented by South ("South", North of "South", as the South comprehends Greece, the South of Italy, the South of the Iberian Peninsula, and Ireland!), to the tri-partition of the Union's territory by *Parkinson* et al. (1992): the "Old Core", the "New Core", and the "Periphery", in this case suggesting an evolutionary process.

One aspect that has merited little attention in studies produced on the urban systems and sub-systems of the European Community, mainly focused on the process of integration of the Union's space, is that of the role which some of the peripheral subsystems have played (or continue to play) in a centrifugal sense/outside of the European space, which result from distinct historical phenomena:

- commercial maritime relations with extra European territories (America, Africa, West and Southern Mediterranean);
- the maintenance of strong relations with diaspora communities (Ireland, Portugal, Greece, Sicily);
- inheritance of colonial periods (Portugal, Spain, Ireland, Scotland).

All these subsystems were greatly overseas-oriented, thus favouring the development of important merchant fleets and port cities, as well as air-transport activity (Greece, Southern Italy, Portugal).

Hence, the process of integration of the European space has been expressed, essentially, as a process of continentalisation:

- The percentage of commercial trade has increased, in some cases dramatically, in favour of the "Centre" or secondary continental poles.
- The flow of goods is accompanied (preceded and followed) by financial flows as well as flows of information.
- Continentalisation was preceded by a flux of people (Italians, Spanish, Portuguese, Greeks migrating to the Centre in the 1950s and 1960s).
- The periphery loses population and ages, while the Centre grows and rejuvenates, either by recovering natality rates or by immigration flows.
- This results in the strengthening of transportation and communication infrastructures, aimed, essentially, at the Centre (principal) and at the secondary centres.

The implementation of the "Fortress Europe" concept will certainly contribute to the weakening of peripheral urban subsystems, from the Mediterranean flank to the Baltic, passing through the new Eastern frontier. On the other hand, a strengthening of the Centre is expected, which will migrate towards the east, strengthening the Berlin-Prague-Vienna axis (is there to be a new "wall" eastwards?).

On the other hand, the redefinition of sub-regional urban systems is expected: in the Bal-

tic, along the Stockholm-Copenhagen-Hamburg axis; in the Iberian Peninsula, with the strengthening of Madrid's centrality; in the East-Mediterranean flank, possibly including the Balkans, Greece, Turkey, Cyprus and Southern Italy.

### **3. Some Empirical Evidence of the Relationships between European Integration, Spatial Concentration and Urban Polarisation**

#### *3.1 Literature report*

The growing internationalisation of the economy and the development of telecommunication technologies have revalued the role of cities, namely of capital and finance cities. European integration has accentuated the phenomenon of economic concentration which has assumed maximum expression at the Centre of Europe. *Cheshire's* (1990, 1995 and 1999) empirical studies on the performance of growth in 120 of Europe's largest urban regions point to the reinforcement of central urban regions in relation to medium-sized urban regions. Considering that different forms of criteria for the evaluation of results have been used, these predict the maintenance of top positions by the cities of Paris, Frankfurt, Munich, and the urban regions of Europe's "old centre", although the positive affirmation of some cities which comprehend the "new centre" (the case of Barcelona and Madrid) is also noted. The author highlights the importance of the international economy's integration process for the increase in competitiveness and considers that there "has been given a deliberate and powerful political boost by the creation of the EC" (*Cheshire* 1995: 111). The abolition of trade barriers, the creation of the single currency and the application of the principle of free movement of people, goods and services has led to the process of re-structuring of large firms. These organise themselves in order to serve "Europe" and not the various national European markets, thus explaining the process of economic and financial concentration and geographic centralisation.



Fig. 1 Levels of intensity of relations between leading banking locations in the EU-15 countries (source: Pagetti 1998) / Ebenen der Beziehungsintensität zwischen führenden Bankenstandorten in den Ländern der EU-15 (Quelle: Pagetti 1998)

Rozenblat's studies (1992, 1998a, 1998b) also report aspects of the centralisation caused by the process of European integration. An analysis of branch plant locations by a number of Europe's largest firms, in 1990 and in 1996, shows a clear "decline" in the choice of peripheral urban systems, in favour of the central system – which heads towards polycentrism, and, in a way, a relative strengthening of peripheral capitals. Taking account of the space of the 12 plus Switzerland and Austria, the "emptying" of the following areas is noted: Scotland and Northern England, Ireland (with only Dublin remaining); Portugal and Spain (Madrid, Barcelona and Lisbon with relative distinction), Southern and Southwest France, Southern Italy and Greece. The author proceeds highlighting the fact that in 1996, in Eastern Europe, branch plants were essentially located in national capitals, which, as she states, was not the case in Western Europe in 1990. This, however, changes if 1996 and the peripheral urban systems of Western Europe are considered, where the dominance of national capitals is evident: Helsinki, Stockholm, Oslo, Copenhagen, Dublin, Lisbon, Madrid (in spite of Barcelona), Paris, Athens, the Italian case requiring a divided reading (North and South). In this author's view there is a large margin of "non-urban locations" in Sweden, Norway and Greece, which has more to do with a definition of urban perimeters, as they correspond mainly to the peripheries of capitals. For, as in the Swiss case, a great part of residential space belongs to an urban quasi-continuum: the corridor between the Jura and the Alps, from Geneva to Zurich. Also noted is the fact that a great number of branch plants of multinational companies with "non-urban locations" are "production" sites, although with most relative significance as poles of "investigation/research and development", two typical situations of peri-urban location.

Kunzmann (1996) reports three spatial development tendencies in Europe: specialisation, spatial differentiation and increasing spatial polarisation. These tendencies are verified at the European, national and regional level.

It is obvious that a process of "regionalisation" (construction of the European Union) will aim at spatial/sectoral specialisation, which may or may not increase polarisation.

The map in *Figure 1* about the mutual relations of the main banking markets of the EU-15 countries, relative to 1993, produced by *Flora Pagetti* (Pagetti 1998), shows with great clarity the dependency of the periphery's main markets in relation to the Centre as well as the emergence of five sub-regional poles, behind London and Paris: Frankfurt, Brussels, Amsterdam, Milan and Madrid (beside the very particular case of Luxembourg), all of which are located at the Centre, with the exception of Madrid.

It would be interesting to investigate the evolutionary tendencies of the last decades, namely the changes in relations with the United States, between the EFTA countries, and with Russia and the other states of the former USSR (in the case of Helsinki).

In Lisbon's case, a process of sub-regionalisation is clearly noted (integration with Madrid) and continentalisation and the incrementation of relations with the Amsterdam-Brussels-Frankfurt-Milan axis. If Switzerland (Geneva/Zurich) was introduced, continentalisation would be more obvious. This process has various determining factors: EFTA "integration" into the EC; flows of structural funds from Brussels; Portuguese emigration, mainly towards France, Switzerland and



Tab. 1 Weekly direct connections (number of flights) from the peripheral metropolises to Europe and the rest of the world, 1989 and 2000 / *Wöchentliche Direktverbindungen (Anzahl der Flüge) von den Metropolen der Peripherie nach Europa und in den Rest der Welt 1989 und 2000*

Cities	Destinations: number of flights per week, 1989 and 2000									
	Eastern Europe		Western Europe		Europe		Rest of World		Total	
	1989	2000	1989	2000	1989	2000	1989	2000	1989	2000
Helsinki	23	122	351	1196	374	1318	27	19	401	1337
Stockholm	24	81	687	2376	711	2457	55	74	766	2531
Athens	15	48	302	551	317	599	144	135	461	734
Glasgow	2	0	152	283	154	283	10	11	164	294
Dublin	0	8	486	1075	486	1083	23	37	509	1120
Lisbon	5	2	213	793	218	795	73	170	291	965
Palermo	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	3	1	3
Naples	0	0	34	78	34	78	0	0	34	78

Germany; regional internationalisation of firms from EU countries.

### 3.2 Air traffic changes and the European urban system

By analysing the evolution of air connections of six metropolises of three European peripheries – Nordic (Helsinki and Stockholm), British Isles (Glasgow and Dublin) and Mediterranean (Lisbon and Athens) –, we note the strengthening of connections to Europe, in relation to the rest of the world. In the group of these six metropolises, the share of weekly flights to European airports was 87.2 % of the total flows in 1989 and 93.6 % in 2000.

The reduction in connections to the rest of the world is common to the six airports. In the four northern airports, the percentage of connections to Europe amounts to more than 96 % of the total, reaching 98.6 % in the case of Helsinki. Although they have lost relative importance, connections to other destinations in Athens (31.2 %

in 1989; 18.4 % in 2000) and in Lisbon (25.1 % in 1989; 17.6 % in 2000) are distinctly above the relative significance they have in other metropolises. This must be a result of the emigrant market, and, in the case of Lisbon, of the links that are still kept with former African colonies (see Tab. 1 and Tab. 2).

As expected, this growth is particularly marked in the connections of these cities to Brussels, but the attraction of London and Paris is also very strong. The results also suggest a strengthening of sub-regional dependencies, illustrated by the strong growth in connections between Lisbon and Madrid: from 27 weekly flights in 1989 to 160 in 2000, but also in the Lisbon-Barcelona link, from 4 to 57. Similarly, there has been a large increase in the connections from Helsinki, Stockholm and Athens to Eastern European airports.

In this context, the increasing importance of connections from Athens to the Middle East also suggests a sub-regional strengthening and the potential of Athens as the gateway of Europe to the Southeast Mediterranean and the Middle East.



Tab. 2 Weekly direct connections (in % of total) from the peripheral metropolises to Europe and the rest of the world, 1989 and 2000 / *Wöchentliche Direktverbindungen (in Prozent) von den Metropolen der Peripherie nach Europa und in den Rest der Welt 1989 und 2000*

Cities	Destinations: % of total, 1989 and 2000							
	Eastern Europe		Western Europe		Europe		Rest of World	
	1989	2000	1989	2000	1989	2000	1989	2000
Helsinki	5,7	9,1	87,5	89,5	93,3	98,6	6,7	1,4
Stockholm	3,1	3,2	89,7	93,9	92,8	97,1	7,2	2,9
Athens	3,3	6,5	65,5	75,1	68,8	81,6	31,2	18,4
Glasgow	1,2	0	92,7	96,3	93,9	96,3	6,1	3,7
Dublin	0	0,7	95,5	96,0	95,5	96,7	4,5	3,3
Lisbon	1,7	0,2	73,2	82,2	74,9	82,4	25,1	17,6
Palermo	0	0	100	0	100	0	0	100
Naples	0	0	100	100	100	100	0	0

The intercontinental connections show, on the one hand, a concentration on large European centres: London, Paris and Frankfurt, and some specialisation among these. Thus, while London offers increased advantages in connections to North America (+19.6 %) and Australia (+57 %), Paris accentuates its dominance in Central and South America (+206 %) maintaining its leadership in connections to Africa. Frankfurt has the largest increase in flights to India/Southeast Asia/Far East (+135 %) and to Africa (+102 %).

It is also interesting to note the tendencies of centralisation at the intercontinental scale, well illustrated by the case of New York (J. F. Kennedy and Newark), both in what concerns the main European airports and in the relation with the metropolises of peripheral Europe that we have analysed. Thus, Frankfurt as well as Paris, which decreased their direct connections to North America as a whole between 1989 and 2000, registered increases in connections to New York in the very same period.

From this brief analysis we can extract some early conclusions:

- The large increase in air connections of European metropolises, both at the centre and the periphery, shows different orientations during the 1989-2000 period.
- Most significant growth has occurred within Europe, with or without consideration of Eastern and East Central European countries: In the six peripheral metropolises and in the three of the "Centre", the relative significance of connections with European cities has increased in relation to the rest of the world.
- At the same time, tendencies of specialisation can be seen in intercontinental connections: London is more than ever oriented towards North America, Asia and Australia, Paris and Frankfurt, in contrast, more to Africa and Central and South America.
- The results suggest that the response to globalisation through "regionalisation" (construction of Europe) has had a greater impact than European "adhesion" to globalisation. On the other hand, globalisation has implied

the concentration of intercontinental connections, well illustrated in the case of New York, which concentrated connections to Europe between 1989 and 2000, in detriment of other destinations in North America.

- The emergence of sub-regional reinforcements within Europe is also noted, of which the clearest evidence is the increase in connections between Lisbon, Barcelona and Madrid.
- Some peripheral metropolises indicate their vocation to polarise relations with sub-regional spaces outside the EU-15 context: Helsinki to some extent, Stockholm and Athens in relation to Eastern Europe, and the latter also in relation to the Middle East.

#### **4. The Southern Peripheries: Centralisation, Litoralisation and Marginalisation**

The growth of tourism since the 1950s has constituted one of the strongest elements of the new economic base of Southern European cities, from Portugal's South Coast to the island of Crete. Processes of regionalisation/localisation also strengthen the role of some coastal cities (Malaga, Valencia, Barcelona, Palma de Majorca, Iraklion, Palermo etc.); these two phenomena, together with the development of the Huerta agriculture (intensive irrigation) have promoted the litoralisation of settlement, spreading along the rest of the maritime fringe of the Iberian Peninsula, France, and Italy. The new highways have reinforced this phenomenon. In a way, in some cases, we find a "contradiction" between the "litoralisation" of the settlements and the "continentalisation" of the economic flows: The Iberian Peninsula shows some examples of that "contradiction".

The renaissance of coastal trade, with changes in some polarised ports, could contribute to reinforce this prospective scenario: an area expressed spa-

tially as a continuous linear coastal urbanisation, as already evident in Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal.

Thus, linear urban systems tend to develop a polycentric urban model marked by stronger polarisations generally constituting anchors to the hinterland and the foreland; on the other hand, the urban continuum catalyses the development of complementarities, especially in areas well supported by systems of ecological transport.

The peripheral urban systems, beside serving, at the highest level, as anchors to the European and extra-European systems – providing robustness and cohesion to the Union's space – must also be strongly articulated with and embedded into the territories in which they are inscribed.

The structuring role of these urban systems is fundamental in the fight against the marginalisation of Europe's more peripheral area. This is applied particularly to the "empty" hinterlands of large parts of these urbanised coastal fringes, where population density is very low and traditional Mediterranean agriculture on the decline.

It has been proved that CAP does not have appropriate measures to stop the spread of these marginalised rural areas; on the contrary, during its periods of activity, it caused the expansion of abandoned rural areas, abandoned both by production and population, leaving vast areas deprived of the presence of rural activities and with severe consequences for the territory's environment and image. Thus, an important step is to design coherent urban policies that encourage the recuperation of small and medium sized cities in these vast areas undergoing processes of marginalisation.

Alentejo, a vast region covering almost one third of Portugal, constitutes a good example of this type of policy. In light of a steady decline in agriculture and the emigration of a large number of its population (between 1960 and 1991 Alentejo's population decreased from 760,916 inhab-

itants to 543,442), the small urban nuclei corresponding to heads of municipalities and a certain number of intermediate cities developed into poles resistant to desertification, and today, with improvements in accessibilities, they have started to gather the conditions required for the location of new activities and populations, and, in return, see their rural spaces valorised.

At the same time, these small urban nuclei where great efforts were made to build basic infrastructures and social equipment, have prepared themselves for the development of ecological, rural and cultural tourism. Lastly, but very importantly, this process revalorised both the agrarian and edified patrimony.

This process is also represented in large parts of Portugal's northern interior and in Spain, although in this country the modernisation of agriculture has frequently served as a base for the creation of agro-business poles. Another situation, which one could refer to as "local additionality", results from a combination of Community funds and the application of important monetary flows of emigrants aimed at investments, no longer in the villages of origin but rather in the closest urban centres (heads of municipalities and province capitals), contributing to the "rebuilding" of local urban systems.

If we add state monetary transfers to these resources, we find the ingredients that explain the halt in rapid demographic decline and the diminishment of territorial asymmetries, in terms of economic and social development. In fact, after integration into the European Community (1986), it was possible to reach a real convergence to some extent, both in regard to the country in relation with the Community's average and in regard to the different regions and sub-regions of Portugal, as measured by NUTS II and NUTS III, with regard to GDP and summary indicators. In the Portuguese case, which can be extended to the Spanish case here, supported by the regionalisation process

(creation of *Comunidades Autónomas Regionais* which, however, are not much more efficient), the reinforcement and cohesion of local/regional/national urban systems does not result from explicit urban policies but rather from the implicit integration of distinct sectoral policies.

It is essential now to deepen policies in areas such as tourism, local accessibilities (public transportation) and education, striving towards a culture of quality food consumption and thus to start a rebirth of rural areas pushed by urbanism.

### 5. Towards a Conclusion: The Increase in "Capitality" by Periphery State Capitals

While a certain number of measures and actions taken at the level of the Union seek to "weaken" identification with the State, namely through the valorisation of regions – "Europe of the Regions" – in the urban systems of peripheral countries, there is a distinct valorisation of the "capitality" of the national capital. This is definitely true for Athens, Lisbon, Madrid, Dublin and Helsinki.

Through nine centuries of history, Portugal's peripheral situation in the Iberian Peninsula and Europe determined the primacy of Lisbon, in other words, primacy goes hand in hand with competitiveness, which is one of the costs of being "peripheral" (Gaspar 1997: 150). And after decolonisation in 1975, "Portugal's integration into the European Community on January 1, 1986, gave Lisbon a new lease of life. It benefited greatly from the process of de-nationalisation, which began in the 1980s and strengthened the city's economic, financial and political importance at the national and international level" (Gaspar 1990, 1997: 149).

The apparently contradictory fact relates to the new role that the capital (as seat of government and other institutions of national sovereignty) should play in the relationship with European Union institutions, particularly with the Commis-

sion. Thus, by maintaining the importance of bilateral relationships, in Europe and the rest of the world, the relationship of capitals with European institutions is magnified. On the other hand, in the context of an embryonic polycentrism at the level of the European urban system, it is mainly the capitals that share a portion of the Union's inherent capitality, expressed not only in the headquarters of some of the community organisms, but also in the political role played by each national government in the rule of the Union; besides, in the private sector, with the tendencies to the merging of big companies, the capitals tend to strengthen their economic role, too.

Yet everything may change if the European Union opts for a strategy of polinuclear urban systems, also at the highest level, privileging comparative locational advantages, with an open perspective to the exterior. We reach the concept of a gateway-city in the context of peripheral urban systems.

History shows that many geographically peripheral cities gained centrality by establishing trade networks away from the European core cities. Among the examples frequently quoted are the Hanseatic League and the merchant and maritime cities of Italy (e.g. Genoa, Venice, Amalfi), as well as the cases of Lisbon or Seville during the 15<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, at the south of the Iberian Peninsula, or until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the cases of Great Britain's west coast ports as well as Bordeaux or Vigo.

History also shows that the age of many of these geographically peripheral cities corresponds to periods in which integration at the Centre, in central urban systems, intensifies, through their performance as "gateways": Seville, Lisbon and other ports of the Atlantic front are good examples; in the same way that Stockholm and Copenhagen contributed to the articulation between the Slavic world of the north, the Germanic space and the North Sea, where the Netherlands – Great Britain axis emerged.

Citing once more *Pagetti's* study (1998), we find that the role of national capitals is particularly evident in the European banking system. Within the countries of EU-15 the author shows the existence of three or four levels of banking activity centres, in which 16 cities are mentioned, of which only two do not constitute national capitals – Frankfurt and Milan, both belonging to national urban systems truly polycentric at the highest level. The author concludes by stating that these cities are expected to keep polarising banking activities, noting however that this is particularly valid at the highest level. In this context, one can question if "dispersion" on the periphery and concentration at the centre makes sense? Recent conglomerations of banks indicate that national peripheral "poles" will continue to function as "relais" between peripheral urban systems and the "Centre". The same can be inferred from the analysis of the main airport centres, as we have tried to point out above.

One hypothesis reverts to the principle of polarised development. In the peripheries of the European system, at the initial phase of the integration process, a concentration of firms and services occurs, mainly international services and firms, in the capital or in other main cities, which strengthens the anchorage of each subsystem to the Centre of the European system. In some cases we are dealing with a recuperation of "capitality" in relation to the national or regional space. At a second phase, these poles find a specific role in the context of the European space, which should make a "contribution" for the development of the system as a whole – it may also represent the affirmation of its role as junction (or gateway) relatively to the extra-European spaces in relation to which they affirm advantages in the European context, or for historic-cultural reasons, or geographical proximity or other types of affinities – in reality what may happen is the conjugation of various factors of approximation.

This process will allow a progressive strengthening of the peripheral city sub-system and

from then its integration through access to new opportunities and the construction of new functional networks.

One such evolution contemplates the studies of processes of specialisation (*Camagni* 1990, quoted by *Cuadrado-Roura* and *Rubalcaba-Bermejo* 1998), as well as the concept of specialisation cycles. In reality, the new role required of larger cities of peripheral urban systems in the context of European integration, implies an adjustment with respective specialisation, responding to the new challenges of competition. It also copes with two main issues introduced by *Dematteis* dealing with the Italian urban system towards European integration: "Cities are one of the fundamental factors for concrete achievement of the economic and social cohesion of the European Union" (*Dematteis* 1999a: 13); and the potential role as "exchangers" that some peripheral cities can play, namely in Southern Italy (*Dematteis* 1999b).

## 6. Final Remarks

As a final reflection, I would like to focus on the fact that during its history, Europe, either through its combination of spaces with unique identities and nations, or through relevance to its surrounding spaces – the maritime powers – worked with a greater opening to other continents: allowing "entrances" and "exits". With the exception of Russia, the main powers, at each historical moment, had to promote openings in various directions, always finding complementarities and opportunities – ever since the Roman Empire! Today, in one sense, it seems as if we were going back 2000 years in time, in regard to macro-regional strategy. This may generate the danger of letting ourselves become closed and surrounded by "new barbarians" awaiting the sclerosis of the continent. The urban systems of the peripheral European regions can also play a structuring role here, as gateways and economic, social and cultural interfaces.

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- Summary: European Union Enlargement and the New Roles of National Capitals at the European Peripheries*
- Many authors have debated the consequences of regional and urban dynamics relating to the European Community enlargement process since the 1970s. A certain consensus has been reached concerning the domino effect of this process on inter-regional and inter-urban competition. Empirical evidence already reveals that successive EU enlargements have led to the strengthening of more central spaces (e.g. 'blue banana', 'core', 'pentagon') and the more powerful metropolises in particular. Based on other research on correlated issues and focusing on the analysis of air traffic departures and arrivals to and from metropolises situated at the European peripheries in the period between 1989 and 2000 we reach some interesting conclusions. The results show that, along with a 'centralisation and continentalisation' of spaces within the EU, the main metropolises at the European peripheries – particularly national capi-



tals – are becoming stronger. By examining the changes in air travel connections (number of commercial flights per week) for the six metropolises belonging to three peripheries of Europe (Scandinavia, British Isles and the Mediterranean) from 1989 to 2000, we observe an increased number of connections with the centre of Europe (London, Brussels, Paris, Frankfurt and Amsterdam) and a reduced number towards countries outside the EU. Furthermore, we also see the emergence of new sub-regional realities, such as the Baltic and the Iberian Peninsula. On the other hand, the growing importance of connections between Athens and the Middle East hint at Athens's potential role in a sub-regional trans-border space, as a European gateway city in the Eastern Mediterranean. An analysis of inter-continental flights shows both their concentration in the largest European airports and a specialisation of these airports regarding the servicing of destinations outside Europe. This article has a particular focus on Southern Europe, where we are simultaneously witnessing a pull towards EU 'centres' and their metropolises and experiencing the growth of coastal development due to the convergence of two economic specialisations: tourism and intensive agriculture. This leads to the emergence of urban systems, linear and polycentric – from the Iberian Peninsula to Greece –, that are able to maintain relations with partners outside Europe as well as contribute to greater cohesion of urban space within the EU. Indeed, the structuring role of these coastal urban systems is very important in order to avoid or at least the marginalisation of more peripheral areas. This analytical approach may also apply to other areas on the peripheries of Europe, such as the Baltic. To conclude, we may debate the current issue of the decline of the state and the transfer of power in favour regions and cities. Some decisions made at the EU level in fact suggest a decline in the state's role. Yet, at least in the case of urban systems in countries at the edge of Europe, from Dublin to Lisbon, Lisbon to Helsinki, we are witnessing greater recognition of the 'capital-ness' of nation-states' capitals. There thus appears to be a contradiction; we should, however, keep two facts in mind: 1) The effect of concentration/centralisation that we associate with the EU level also takes place at the sub-regional level and in each country. 2) In the context of an embryonic poly-

centrism at the EU level in terms of space, we may see that these cities are typically national capitals that share the 'capital-ness' specific to the EU, which translates not only into the setting-up of a few new EU agencies but also into the political role that each national government plays in the private sector, tending towards the conglomeration of large societies, as capital cities have the tendency to strengthen their economic role.

*Zusammenfassung: Die Erweiterung der Europäischen Union und die neue Rolle nationaler Hauptstädte an den europäischen Peripherien*

Die Konsequenzen des regionalen und urbanen Wandels im Zusammenhang mit dem Erweiterungsprozess der Europäischen Union seit den 1970er Jahren werden von vielen Autoren diskutiert. Ein gewisser Konsens wurde dabei erreicht bezüglich des Dominoeffekts dieses Prozesses hinsichtlich des interregionalen und interurbanen Wettbewerbs. So konnte empirisch nachgewiesen werden, dass die schrittweise EU-Erweiterung eher zur Stärkung zentraler Räume (z.B. in Form der 'Blauen Banane', des 'Kerns' bzw. des 'Pentagons') und insbesondere zu stärkeren Metropolen geführt hat. Basierend auf anderen Untersuchungen verwandter Themen und gestützt auf die Analyse von Flugverbindungen von und nach den Metropolen an der europäischen Peripherie, können wir einige interessante Schlussfolgerungen ziehen. Die Ergebnisse zeigen, dass parallel zu einer 'Zentralisierung und Kontinentalisierung' innerhalb der EU die führenden Metropolenräume an der europäischen Peripherie – insbesondere die nationalen Hauptstädte – stärker werden. Bei der Untersuchung der Entwicklung der Flugverbindungen (Anzahl der Linienflüge pro Woche) von sechs Metropolen, die zu drei peripheren Großräumen Europas gehören (Skandinavien, die Britischen Inseln und der Mittelmeerraum) – zwischen 1989 und 2000 – beobachten wir eine zunehmende Zahl von Verbindungen mit den Zentren Europas (London, Brüssel, Paris, Frankfurt und Amsterdam) und eine abnehmende Anzahl von Verbindungen in Richtung auf Länder außerhalb der EU. Darüber hinaus sehen wir auch das Entstehen neuer subregionaler Strukturen, wie z.B. im Ostseeraum und auf der Iberischen Halbinsel. Auf der



anderen Seite deutet die wachsende Bedeutung von Verbindungen zwischen Athen und dem Nahen Osten auf Athens Potenzial in einem subregionalen grenzübergreifenden Raum, als europäisches Tor zum östlichen Mittelmeerraum. Eine Analyse interkontinentaler Flüge zeigt einerseits ihre Konzentration auf die größten europäischen Flughäfen als auch andererseits deren Spezialisierung auf Zielorte außerhalb Europas. Dieser Beitrag bezieht sich vor allem auf Südeuropa, wo wir eine Sogwirkung in Richtung auf die großen 'Zentralräume' der EU und ihre Metropolen beobachten und gleichzeitig eine starke Entwicklung der Küstenräume erleben aufgrund des Zusammentreffens zweier wirtschaftlicher Spezialisierungsprozesse im Zusammenhang mit Tourismus einerseits und intensiver Landwirtschaft andererseits. Dadurch entstehen von der Iberischen Halbinsel bis nach Griechenland Städtesysteme mit linearer und polyzentrischer Anlage, die in der Lage sind, Beziehungen mit Partnern außerhalb Europas aufrechtzuerhalten sowie zu einem größeren Zusammenhalt des städtischen Raumes innerhalb der EU beizutragen. In der Tat können diese Städtesysteme an der Küste eine wichtige Rolle einnehmen bei der Vermeidung oder zumindest Minderung der Marginalisierung weiterer peripherer Regionen. Dieser analytische Denkansatz könnte auch auf andere Regionen an der Peripherie Europas angewendet werden, wie z.B. den Ostseeraum. Abschließend diskutieren wir das aktuelle Thema des Bedeutungsverlusts des Staats angesichts von Machtverschiebungen zugunsten von Regionen und Städten. Einige auf EU-Ebene getroffene Entscheidungen führen in der Tat zu einem Abbau der Rolle des Staats. Und, zumindest im Falle der Städtesysteme in den Ländern am Rande Europas, von Dublin bis Lissabon und von Lissabon bis Helsinki, beobachten wir eine größere Beachtung des „Hauptstadt-Seins“ der Hauptstädte der Nationalstaaten. Da scheint ein Widerspruch zu bestehen. Dennoch sollten wir zwei Aspekte bedenken: 1) Der Prozess der Konzentration bzw. Zentralisierung, den wir auf der EU-Ebene verbinden, findet auch auf der subregionalen Ebene und in jedem Land statt. 2) Im Kontext mit einem erst im Entstehen begriffenen Polyzentrismus auf EU-Ebene, in Bezug auf den Raum, erkennen wir, dass diese Städte typischerweise nationale Hauptstädte sind, die an Hauptstadtfunktionen der EU teilhaben, was sich dann

nicht nur in der Errichtung einiger neuer EU-Behörden niederschlägt, sondern auch in der politischen Rolle, die jede nationale Regierung für den Privatsektor spielt, in welchem die Tendenz zur Konzentration in großen Gesellschaften besteht, was wiederum die wirtschaftliche Rolle der Hauptstädte stärkt.

*Résumé: L'élargissement de l'Union Européenne et les nouveaux rôles des capitales nationales des périphéries européennes*

Plusieurs auteurs ont discuté les conséquences des dynamiques régionales et urbaines du processus d'élargissement des Communautés Européennes depuis les années 1970. Il y a un certain consensus en ce qui concerne l'effet de levier de ce processus sur la compétition interrégionale et interurbaine. Il y a déjà des résultats empiriques qui montrent que les élargissements successifs de l'UE ont provoqué le renforcement des espaces plus centraux ('banane bleue', 'core', 'pentagone') et en particulier des métropoles les plus puissantes. À partir d'autres recherches sur des thèmes co-relatifs et en tenant compte de l'analyse du flux aérien pour la période 1989-2000 au départ/arrivée et entre les métropoles de la périphérie européenne, on est arrivé à des conclusions intéressantes. Les résultats mettent en évidence, en même temps qu'une 'centralisation et continentalisation' des territoires de l'Union, un renforcement des principales métropoles de la périphérie européenne et en particulier des villes capitales nationales. En analysant l'évolution (1989-2000) des connexions aériennes (nombre des vols commerciaux par semaine) de six métropoles appartenant à trois périphéries européennes (Nordique, des Îles Britanniques et Méditerranéenne) nous avons remarqué le renforcement des connexions vers le centre (Londres, Bruxelles, Paris, Frankfurt, Amsterdam) et la diminution en termes relatifs des connexions vers les pays en dehors de l'UE. En outre, la formation de nouvelles réalités sous-régionales, comme la Baltique et la Péninsule Ibérique, est évidente. Par contre, l'importance croissante des liaisons entre Athènes et le Proche-Orient suggère le rôle potentiel d'Athènes dans un espace sous-régional transfrontalier (U.E. vs le Proche-Orient), comme ville porte de l'Europe dans la Méditerranée

Orientale. L'analyse des vols intercontinentaux montre d'une part la concentration dans les grands aéroports européens et d'autre part leur spécialisation en termes de destinations extra-européennes. L'article commente en particulier la situation dans l'Europe du Sud, où en même temps qu'on assiste à une attraction vers les 'Centres' de l'UE et des métropoles de chaque pays, on assiste à l'expansion de la littoralisation, par la convergence de deux spécialisations économiques: le tourisme et l'agriculture intensive. Il en résulte que, de la Péninsule Ibérique jusqu'en Grèce, on voit se dessiner des systèmes urbains, linéaires et polycentriques, capables d'ancrer des relations extra-européennes ainsi que contribuer à une meilleure cohésion de l'espace urbain de l'Union. En outre, le rôle structurant de ces systèmes urbains littoraux est très important pour éviter/réduire la marginalisation des aires plus périphériques. Cette grille d'analyse peut être aussi appliquée dans d'autres périphéries, comme celle de la Baltique. En guise de conclusion on peut discuter la question très actuelle du déclin de l'État en faveur du pouvoir des régions et surtout des villes. Quelques décisions prises au niveau de l'Union suggèrent, en effet, une dévalorisation du rôle de l'Etat, mais, au moins dans les systèmes urbains des pays périphériques, de Dublin à Lis-

bonne, de Lisbonne à Helsinki, on assiste à une valorisation de la 'capitalité' des capitales des états nationaux. Il y a ici une apparente contradiction, mais il faut tenir compte de deux faits: 1. L'effet de concentration/centralisation, qu'on assigne au niveau de l'Union, se réalise aussi au niveau sous-régional et dans chaque pays. 2. Dans le contexte d'un polycentrisme embryonnaire au niveau de l'espace de l'Union, ce sont surtout les capitales nationales qui partagent la 'capitalité' spécifique de l'Union, ce qui se traduit non seulement dans la localisation de quelques nouvelles agences communautaires, mais aussi dans le rôle politique joué par chaque gouvernement national dans le secteur privé, avec les tendances à la conglomération des grandes sociétés, les villes capitales ayant tendance à renforcer leur rôle économique.

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